

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ARA-10 IO-13 /112 W
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R 181321Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5709
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 05437

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR EG ET SO
SUBJECT: "FABRICATED CRISIS" WITH ETHIOPIA?

1. LOCAL DAILIES FEBRUARY 18 QUOTE "RESPONSIBLE FOREIGN
MINISTRY SOURCE" (PROBABLY ACTING FONMIN BUTROS GHALI)
THAT ETHIOPIA HAS CREATED "FABRICATED CRISIS" OVER
INCIDENT INVOLVING EGYPTIAN CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT FORCED
DOWN IN NAIROBI. MFA SOURCE CONDEMNED ETHIOPIAN FONMIN
FELEKE, WHO CALLED IN ALL AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN ADDIS
ABABA, WITH EXCEPTION OF EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR, AND
CONDEMNED EGYPTIAN "AGGRESSION" AGAINST AFRICAN COUNTRIES.
FELEKE'S CHARGE, COUPLED WITH MENGISTU'S CLAIM THAT
TROOPS FROM EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, ABU DHABI, AND IRAN
FIGHTING IN OGADEN, IS ACCORDING SOURCE, "FABRICATED
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CRISIS" TO DISCREDIT EGYPT ON EVE OF OAU FONMINS MEETING
IN TRIPOLI.

2. ACCORDING TO "OFFICIAL SOURCE", ETHIOPIAN CAMPAIGN
AGAINST EGYPT WAS LAUNCHED: (A) AS PART OF COORDINATED
PLAN "IN CERTAIN ARAB AND AFRICAN CAPITALS" TO ATTACK
EGYPT; (B) AFTER EGYPTIAN-KENYAN CRISIS OVER COMMERCIAL

AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN "CONTAINED"; (C) AS A "REACTIONARY" MOVE BY ETHIOPIA TO AROUSE DIVISIONS BETWEEN BLACK AND ARAB AFRICA; AND (D) AS MOVE BY ETHIOPIA TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM FACT THAT SOVIET-CUBAN PRESENCE IN OGADEN THREATENS NOT ONLY SOMALIA, BUT ALL AFRICA.

3. AS A RESULT OF THIS ETHIOPIAN "CAMPAIGN", CAIRO MEDIA PORTRAYS GHALI RUSHING INTO ACTION TO TURN TIDE. GHALI MEETING FEBRUARY 18 WITH SOMALI FONMIN, FOLLOWING UP WITH CONTACTS WITH VARIOUS ARAB AND AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN CAIRO. INSTRUCTIONS TO COUNTER ETHIOPIAN "CAMPAIGN" BEING SENT TO AMBASSADOR HATATA (EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR IN DAR ES SALAAM) AT OAU MINISTERS MEETING IN TRIPOLI AND TO EGYPTIAN EMBASSY IN ADDIS ABABA.

4. COMMENT: DETAILS OF ETHIOPIAN "FABRICATED" CAMPAIGN AGAINST EGYPT AND OF FRANTIC ROUND OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY BY GHALI APPEAR AS RATHER SELF-SERVING LEAKS ON PART OF GHALI. GHALI WAS IN VANGUARD OF THOSE ADVOCATING MORE BALANCED EGYPTIAN APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENTS IN HORN AND HAS BEEN PUT ON DEFENSIVE BY TOUGH GOE HANDLING OF KENYANS AFTER SEIZURE OF EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT. IN WAKE OF KENYAN INCIDENT, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT GHALI STILL OUT OF STEP WITH SADAT ON QUESTION OF GOE FULL SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA. EILTS

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